of exports of onion by raising its Minimum Export Prices (MEP). The MEP of onion was increased to $ 495 a tonne from 01.10.2007.

Now that the prices of onion have started declining in the market, the Government has started encouraging export of onion by reducing its MEP to $ 250 per tonne with effect from December 2007.

Compensation to farmers for crop loss

†1955. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that compensation to the farmers is granted at a very poor rate in case their crop is ruined due to natural calamities;

(b) what criteria is adopted in order to assess the amount of compensation; and

(c) whether Government would contemplate to increase the amount of compensation to the affected farmers at the rate of rupees ten thousand per acre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is concerned with matters relating to items and norms of assistance from Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF).

MHA have informed that assistance to farmers for loss of crops in the wake of natural calamities is provided in the form of agriculture input subsidy and not compensation, in accordance with the items and norms approved by the Government.

According to them, it has generally been a practice to review and revise the itmes and norms of assistance immediately after the Award of the Finance Commission is accepted by the Government. Subsequent to acceptance by the Government of the Award of the 12th Finance Commission, an Expert Group was constituted by the MHA to review and recommend revision of the items and norms of assistance from CRF/NCCF.

MHA have further informed that the Government of India, considering the recommendations of the Expert Group has approved the revision of items and norms of assistance from CRF/NCCF, with effect from 27th June, 2007. The norms for agriculture input subsidy have been revised as per details given below:

Item	Old norm (per hectare)	Revised norm (per hectare)
For Rainfed Areas	Rs.1000/-	Rs. 2000/-
For Irrigated Areas	Rs. 2500/-	Rs. 4000/-
For Perennial crops	Rs. 4000/-	Rs. 6000/-

Recommendation of Radhakrishna Committee

1956. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Radhakrishna Committee has recommended to set up an

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.